

Design and Technology in the Early Years at St Columba's

EYFS Coverage

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, design and technology forms part of the learning children acquire under the 'Knowledge and Understanding of the World' branch of the Foundation Stage curriculum, which also covers Geography, History, ICT, and Science. We will deliver high quality D&T, enabling children to 'safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function' and 'use what they have learnt about media and materials in original ways, thinking about uses and purposes'.

How will we provide this?

Children learn through first-hand experiences. They will be encouraged to explore, observe, solve problems, think critically, and make decisions and to talk about why they have made their decisions.

Opportunities

Providing opportunities also means following children's interests and taking them as the starting point for learning, rather than always planning an adult-directed activity.

Design and Technology is an area of learning where children's imaginations, ideas and fascinations can come to life and they are able to recreate them in all kinds of ways with adult support and encouragement. This also links with the statement in the EYFS Statutory Framework on ensuring that there is a balance between child-initiated play and learning and adult -directed activities. 2012, 1.9 page 6)

Exploring and Using Resources

Constructing: Learning to construct with a purpose in mind, some children use scissors, glue, string and a hole punch to make a bag to store travel brochures they collected during a field trip.

Structure and joins: Following a visit to their local street, some children make a church tower out of small wooden bricks.

Using a range of tools: Children will learn about planning and adapting initial ideas to make them better. For example, a child might choose to use scissors, a stapler, elastic bands and glue to join bits together to make a toy vehicle. But they might then modify their initial idea by using masking tape.

Cooking techniques: Some children take turns stirring the mixture for a cake and then watch with fascination as it rises while cooking. They will practise stirring, mixing, pouring and blending ingredients during cookery activities.

Exploration: Children will dismantle things and learn about how everyday objects work. For example, a child might dismantle a pepper grinder and discover how it is put together and the materials different parts are made of.

Discussion: Children will be given opportunities to discuss reasons that make activities safe or unsafe, for example hygiene, electrical awareness, and appropriate use of senses when tasting different flavourings. They will also learn to record their experiences by, for example, drawing, writing and making a tape or model.

Resources:

Children will be encouraged and supported to use of a range of tools, such as scissors, hole punch, stapler, glue spreader, rolling pin, cutter and grater.

Exploring and using media and materials

'Exploring and using media and materials' focuses on how young children engage with the many materials and

creative experiences presented to them. It is through this variety of experiences that children recreate their world and interpret their own ideas. This lies at the heart of creativity and expression and has many links to the other areas of learning.

Good Practise Points

To support children's creativity effectively, we need to give real thought to the time, space, materials and opportunities provided.

Time

All children need lots of time to explore experiment and play with the resources around them. Understanding what you can do with a piece of shiny paper and Sellotape may require lots of trial and error before children feel satisfied with their efforts. Only then can young children become truly involved, absorbed and inspired.

Space

An example, creating something on a small scale with junk materials inside and then recreating it on a large scale outside

And always make the most of the outdoors.

Good Practise Points

When planning and guiding children's activities, staff must reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice.

- The three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are: playing and exploring - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- Active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- Creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Language and Talk

- Children can sort objects by different criteria. You could do this by getting them to help to set the table or organise shopping items to be put away.
- When talking children, look for opportunities to notice and discuss **materials** around them – utensils in the kitchen, tree barks on a walk, soft furnishings in the bedroom.
- While speaking, use the language of designing and making, for example words such as 'join', 'build' and 'shape'. And use evaluative and comparative language – 'longer', 'shorter', 'lighter', 'heavier' and 'stronger'.